

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated April 2, 2009 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 5, 8, 10, 11, and 14 are hereby amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-4, 7, 9, 12, and 15-17 are hereby canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Accordingly, claims 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, and 14 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,029,299 to Baek et al. (hereinafter “Baek”), U.S. Patent No. 6,539,753 to Ito et al. (hereinafter “Ito”) or U.S. Patent No. 6,163,912 to Matsuura et al. (hereinafter “Matsuura”). *Office Action* at p. 2, ¶ 2. The rejection of claims 1-4, 7, 9, 12, and 15-17 is moot as these claims are canceled herein. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of the remaining claims and requests reconsideration.

Independent claim 5 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 5 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “performing a laundry quantity measurement operation after the end of the washing and rinsing operations; performing a preliminary spin drying operation when the measured laundry quantity is not smaller than a reference quantity value; performing a main spin drying operation.” The cited references fail to teach or suggest at least these features of the claimed invention.

The Office asserts that the cited references teach “if the measured laundry quantity is smaller than a reference quantity value and the measured eccentricity is smaller than a reference eccentricity value, performing a main spin drying operation without performing a preliminary spin drying operation.” *Office Action* at p.6 ll:9-11. Applicant respectfully disagrees. *Baek* discloses that “the eccentricity determining operation S232 is performed after the laundry quantity measuring operation S212-S231.” *Baek* at col. 6:22-col.8-47 and Fig. 7A. According to *Baek*, the main spinning cycle is performed without the preliminary spin drying operation

regardless of the measured laundry quantity value. In that, the measured laundry quantity value is not a condition for determining whether the preliminary spin drying operation is performed or not, and the preliminary spin drying operation is never performed. In contrast, Applicant claims that “the preliminary spin drying operation is performed in accordance with the result of comparing the measured laundry quantity and the reference quantity value.” Furthermore, *Baek* is totally silent with regards to the preliminary spin drying operation as recited in the claims. Thus, *Baek* does not disclose, expressly or inherently, all of the features as recited in independent claim 5.

Next, *Ito* discloses that “the preparatory dehydration operation is performed between the unbalanced condition detecting operation and the main dehydration operation.” *Ito* at col. 10:6-14. As seen from Fig. 8 and the associated text of *Ito*, the preparatory dehydration operation is always performed after the unbalanced condition detecting operation. Additionally, the laundry amount detecting step of *Ito* is performed before the wash step. In other words, the laundry amount is not related to whether the preparatory dehydration operation is performed or not. In contrast, Applicant claims that “the preliminary spin drying operation is performed in accordance with the result of comparing the measured laundry quantity and the reference quantity value.” Thus, *Ito* does not disclose, expressly or inherently, all of the features as recited in independent claim 5.

Next, *Matsuura* only discloses that the method for estimating the laundry amount and the unbalanced amount or the unbalanced position. Furthermore, *Matsuura* is entirely silent with regards to the preliminary spin drying operation as recited in the claims. Thus, *Matsuura* does not disclose, expressly or inherently, all of the features as recited in independent claim 5.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the Office withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of independent claim 5. Claims 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, and 14 depend from independent claim 5. It stands to reason that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of those dependent claims should be withdrawn as well.

The application is in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

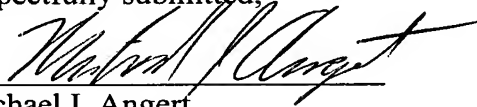
If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

Dated: July 2, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

By



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